



Switzerland's priorities for the 70th session of the UN General Assembly

Switzerland has set the following priorities for the 70th session of the UN General Assembly:

Peace and security

Switzerland is looking for a coherent approach and synergies regarding the three ongoing UN review processes examining the organisation's security architecture – namely UN peacekeeping operations, the UN Peacebuilding Commission and the involvement of women in peace efforts.

Switzerland is committed to improving the protection of civilians via UN peacekeeping operations, strengthening the UN political missions, and building the UN's capacities in conflict prevention and mediation. It advocates for a larger role of the UN in peacebuilding, closer cooperation between the different UN agencies involved, and improving women's participation in peace processes.

Switzerland strongly promotes a holistic and balanced implementation of the four pillars of the UN's global strategy to combat terrorism – to tackle the root causes, prevent and suppress terrorism, build state capacities, and respect human rights and international humanitarian law. It develops new proposals on how to implement this strategy effectively and considers the support of local communities – such as via the Geneva-based Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) – to be of key importance.

Switzerland is committed to the universal ratification and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Human rights

Switzerland is seeking election to the Human Rights Council for the period from 2016-2018. It advocates adequate financing for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' activities, respect for its independence and closer cooperation between the human rights bodies in Geneva and the UN institutions in New York.

Switzerland has the following thematic priorities: the abolition of the death penalty, the prohibition and prevention of torture, women's and children's rights, dealing with the past and the prevention of genocide, the protection of privacy on the internet, and the protection of human rights defenders and human rights in the context of political transition.

Switzerland advocates an international drug policy that prioritises public health, respects human rights and opposes the death penalty for drug offences.

Sustainable development

On 2 August 2015, United Nations Member States agreed on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (previously referred to as the Post-2015 Agenda), which identifies 17 sustainable development goals. These objectives are dealing with the eradication of extreme poverty, education, health, gender equality, water, energy, economic growth and employment, biodiversity and ecosystems as well as to peaceful and inclusive societies.

This new Agenda will be adopted by the heads of state and government during the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, which will take place at the end of September in New York.

Switzerland is committed to implementing the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and seeks to play a key role in designing and implementing the agenda's monitoring mechanism.

Switzerland brings proposals to the international discussion on how to reform the UN's development system to allow the organisation to support the implementation of the new Agenda in an effective, efficient and, above all, coherent way.

Humanitarian efforts

Switzerland is working to develop synergies between the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 and the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2015. In October 2015, it will organise the preparatory conference for the World Humanitarian Summit in Geneva together with the UN.

Switzerland is committed to strengthening the humanitarian system, improving coordination within the humanitarian community, and ensuring more effective help and protection – by increasing, inter alia, the involvement of the affected states and people. Other priorities are the protection of civilians, ensuring compliance with humanitarian principles, improving the access of aid workers to those in need, and increasing prevention and resilience.

Switzerland seeks to ensure that the UN General Assembly adopts the new disaster risk reduction framework for 2015-2030.

Budget and reforms

Switzerland aims to ensure that the UN receives sufficient funds to effectively carry out its mandates and that these resources are used efficiently. It will assume a bridge-building role in the negotiations for the 2016-2017 budget.

Switzerland advocates modernising the UN administration and is developing proposals on how to improve the organisation's programme planning and budget processes. It supports the introduction of the new integrated resource planning system, the reorganisation of the secretariat's services and the reform of the UN Security Council's working methods.

International Geneva

Switzerland is seeking to ensure that the UN General Assembly approves the renovation of the Palais des Nations in Geneva based on a detailed budget and financing plan.

It aims to improve how the existing know-how in Geneva is used in the General Assembly's processes, thereby further reinforcing the role of Geneva as a centre for global governance.